



John G. Rogers, Acting Director  
Janet L. Miller, Bureau Editor



The Interior team that successfully negotiated the agreement for preservation of the Bolsa Chica wetlands included, from left, Ted Boling, counselor to the assistant secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks; Bill McDonald, of the

# Bolsa Chica Wetlands Pact

## State Acquisition Ends Long Preservation Fight

Don Steffeck, Chief, Division of Environmental Contaminants, Portland, Oregon

A 25-year campaign to preserve the 1,000-acre Bolsa Chica wetlands on the southern California coast came to a successful conclusion when the California State Lands Commission voted unanimously earlier this year to approve state acquisition and restoration of 880 acres.

According to the complex deal, the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles will pay up to \$79 million to buy and restore the wetlands. Koll Real Estate Group, the landowner, will receive \$25 million for the land. About \$45 million will go for wetlands restoration that includes a tidal inlet channel and shallow water flushing action. Clean-up costs after a half century of oil production from 400 wells on the site are from \$10 million to \$15 million.

Located near Huntington Beach, California, between Los Angeles and San Diego, Bolsa Chica has been the subject of numerous development proposals. Most recently, Koll obtained state approval to build 900 homes on fill material and restore the remaining wetlands. State and federal agencies preferred a complex mitigation plan that would allow the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles to expand existing facilities in nearshore ocean habitats in exchange for paying to restore part of Bolsa Chica.



Office of the Solicitor's Pacific Southwest Division; and Don Steffeck, contaminants coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Region I Office in Portland. Below, at left, George Frampton, the former assistant secretary for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks speaks at a ceremony dedicating the Bolsa Chica Reserve. At left is Doug Wheeler, director of the California Division of Resources.

Bolsa Chica supports more than 250 species of migratory birds, including several endangered and threatened species such as the brown pelican, California least tern, and light-footed clapper rail.

Due to the long history of oil production at Bolsa Chica, the Fish and Wildlife Service was concerned about residual pollution. Under terms of the final agreement:

*The Service will lead an ecological risk assessment to determine contaminant clean-up needs; The oil companies will fund and conduct the clean-up recommended by the assessment; The Service will act as the lead agency in National Environmental Policy Act compliance and subsequent restoration; Either the Service or the state will manage the site using a long-term endowment fund for operational maintenance.*

The agreement also stipulates that the Regional Water Quality Control Board will resolve any disputes over clean-up levels between the resources agencies and the oil companies and most of the

remaining wells will continue to operate until oil production ceases.

Top officials from eight federal and state agencies negotiated this agreement. They included **George Frampton**, former assistant secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks; **Doug Wheeler**, California resources secretary; **Mike Spear**, Fish and Wildlife Service Pacific regional director; **Hilda Diaz Soltero**, National Marine Fisheries Service regional director; and **Felicia Marcus**, Environmental Protection Agency regional administrator. The California State Lands Commission vote, which sealed the agreement, took place February 12.

At ceremonies announcing the agreement, the mayor of Huntington Beach recounted how Bolsa Chica conservation began 25 years ago at a League of Women Voters meeting with representatives of natural resource agencies. A young Fish and Wildlife Service biologist present at that meeting, **Russ Earnest**, went on to become deputy assistant director for Ecological Services in the FWS before his retirement.

## Cold Spring House

Diana Hawkins

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service employees, residents of Warm Springs, Georgia, and other federal, state, and local officials gathered recently to celebrate the completion of Cold Spring House—a building project that will bring long-term benefits to area residents and visitors and boost the region's recreational fishing.

The new building, which was designed and built by the Service at a cost of a little more than \$512,000, houses the artesian springs that provide water to the local municipality and to the Fisheries Center. The center includes the Warm Springs National Fish Hatchery and the Warm Springs Fish Health Laboratory.

"This project touches the lives of all residents of Warm Springs and the many tourists who visit this area in a very positive way," said **Noreen Clough**, the Service's Southeast regional director. "It ensures that the local water supply at Warm Springs meets federal- and state-mandated drinking water requirements for the town and provides water to handle the Service's fishery operations."

**President Franklin Roosevelt's** summer house in Warm Springs remains a popular tourist destination and was the only home he ever owned. The hatchery uses water from the spring to produce striped bass, which adds to Georgia's natural resources, benefits the state's outdoor fishing recreation, and boosts the nation's economy.

## Florida State Supervisor Named

Diana Hawkins

The Fish and Wildlife Service has named **Stephen W. Forsythe** overall supervisor for ecological services programs in the State of Florida. He is stationed in Vero Beach, Florida.

Forsythe transferred from the Service's Washington, D.C., office where he served as chief of the Division of Habitat Conservation and was responsible for administering project planning, the National Wetlands Inventory, Coastal Programs, and the Partners for Wildlife Program.

In his new position, which he assumed April 28, Forsythe will oversee and coordinate all ecological services programs in Florida including management and recovery of threatened and endangered species, wetland permit review, and administration of coastal programs. He will also supervise the Service's field offices in Jacksonville, Panama City, and Vero Beach.



During his 23-year Service career, Forsythe has worked as a wildlife biologist in the Lafayette, Louisiana, and Vicksburg, Mississippi, field offices and as supervisor of the Tulsa, Oklahoma, field office.

Florida, Massachusetts, and North Carolina are the only states in the region in which the Service employs state supervisors. The positions exist here because of the tremendous amount of work being undertaken in these states in high-priority areas of endangered species and habitat restoration.

In his new assignment, Forsythe says he plans to continue working toward restoring the South Florida ecosystem and balancing the recovery of endangered species with the needs of a rapidly growing human population.



# Conservation Contest Helps Goose Populations

Connie M.J. Barclay, Alaska

Picture this: it's 1986 and you're a biologist in western Alaska. You notice that there seem to be fewer geese. Studies show that, indeed, populations of cackling Canada, black brant, emperor, and white-fronted geese are declining. Several other biologists have noticed the same thing and are similarly concerned. What to do?

The answer, in addition to standard conservation measures, was to develop an education program to teach people about the species and their plight. Thus came about the idea of creating a calendar focussing on the species in trouble and featuring kids' artwork, poetry, stories, and slogans.

Recently, the 11th annual Goose Calendar Contest was held at the Fish and Wildlife Service's regional office in Anchorage. This year, more than 2,000 Inupiat, Yup'ik, and Aleut students from kindergarten through

high school submitted entries to illustrate the calendar. The students represent more than 50 schools in 49 communities.

The black brant, emperor, white-fronted, and cackling Canada goose populations have risen dramatically since the first official goose calendar 11 years ago.

"We are just delighted with how the goose calendar contest has taken off," said **Heather Johnson**, education specialist with the Service. "We are reaching thousands of students, parents, and teachers just through the contest alone."

The calendar has become a popular item with teachers, students, animal lovers, Native elders, biologists, and Senators. Last year the Service distributed more than 17,000 goose calendars.

"I think the calendar contest works in several ways to help the goose populations," Johnson said. "The kids



Alaska Regional Director David Allen, left and Senator Ted Stevens examine the newest Alaska Goose Calendar. Photo by Connie M.J. Barclay

that enter the contest learn about geese and may become personally involved in their own conservation efforts. The calendars are distributed throughout entire communities,

ultimately helping to educate others. The calendar contest and the calendar represent a true success story."

## Illinois Man Guilty of CITIES Violations

Georgia Parham  
Timothy Santel

A southern Illinois man admitted his role in an international wildlife trafficking scheme that included smuggling rare and protected reptiles from Spain, as well as shipping nearly 70 poisonous snakes through the U.S. Postal Service in unmarked packages to avoid detection by authorities.

**James P. Zaworski**, 31, of Marion, Illinois, pleaded guilty to one felony count of conspiracy to smuggle wildlife into the United States and to trade in protected species in interstate commerce. Zaworski, a reptile dealer known for his captive-breeding success with small lizards called geckos, entered his guilty plea before U.S. District Court **Judge J. Phil Gilbert** in Benton, Illinois, and now faces five years in jail and-or a \$250,000 fine.

The investigation into Zaworski's activities began in 1994 at New York's Kennedy Airport, where Fish and Wildlife Service inspectors discovered a mail parcel from Spain addressed to Zaworski. Hidden within the parcel were 13 Lilford's wall lizards, a small blue lizard that inhabits the Balearic Islands off the coast of Spain.

These lizards are protected by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), an international conservation agreement to which the United States and Spain are signatory parties.

Following the package to its destination in southern Illinois, Service Special Agent **Timothy Santel** worked with U.S. Postal Service inspectors, Illinois Conservation Police officers, and other Service law enforcement personnel to carry out a federal search warrant at Zaworski's residence. They found records and documents chronicling ten years of smuggling reptiles to and from Spain, France, and South Africa.

Among the reptiles seized at Zaworski's home were the 13 Lilford's wall lizards, European ladder ratsnakes also smuggled from Spain, box turtles illegally collected from a national wildlife refuge, venomous Massasauga rattlesnakes mailed illegally from Florida, a timber rattlesnake and Great Plains ratsnakes listed as threatened species in Illinois, and two desert tortoises—a species considered threatened under the Endangered Species Act.



The Fish and Wildlife Service employs wildlife inspectors at ports of entry to enforce various wildlife protection laws. Above, a Service wildlife inspector holds a confiscated red-backed squirrel monkey.

Zaworski solicited and traded reptiles through the mail with **Juan Gonzalez**, a reptile supplier in Barcelona, Spain. Each would ship parcels containing live reptiles in plastic containers, using fictitious names and addresses. Packages were unmarked and declared as books to avoid detection. Search warrants were also served on Gonzalez by authorities in Barcelona, and portions of the investigation are ongoing in Spain and several U.S. states. Additional people may be charged.

Among the wildlife laws Zaworski violated are the U.S. Endangered Species Act, which prohibits trade in endangered and threatened species, and CITES, which prohibits or restricts trade in listed species among the 134 signatory countries. In addition, Zaworski's trading activities violated the Lacey Act, a federal statute that prohibits interstate commerce in wildlife in violation of state laws.

## Illegal Hunter Sentenced, Fined

Diana Weaver  
Christopher Dowd

A Massachusetts tattoo parlor operator who hunted illegally in Alaska will pay nearly \$30,000 in fines and restitution and will not be allowed to hunt during his 2-year probation.

In a week-long trial last fall, a federal jury convicted **Lawrence J. Romano**, 50, of Mount Washington, Massachusetts, of six felony charges for hunting without a valid license in Alaska and then transporting the illegally taken game across state lines. Those actions violated the Lacey Act, which regulates interstate commerce in wildlife.

During the March 27 sentencing, U.S. District Court **Judge Michael A. Ponsor** fined Romano \$20,000, ordered him to pay the State of Alaska an additional \$9,994 in restitution of lost hunting license revenue, and placed him on supervised probation for two years. As a condition of his probation, Romano will not be allowed to hunt or to be in the company of people engaged in hunting anywhere in the world during his probation. In addition, firearms will not be allowed in the Romano residence during the probationary period and Romano, as a convicted felon, will never be authorized to possess a firearm.

Judge Ponsor also approved a forfeiture order for six big game mounts seized from Romano's home in February 1995. These mounts included Dall sheep, moose, and caribou that had been killed illegally in Alaska. A brown bear mount was previously forfeited to the government as part of a civil action.

While searching the Romano residence, state and federal wildlife agents discovered a live black bear in a cage behind his house and a live copperhead snake, which is an endangered species in Massachusetts, in the cellar. Possession of these animals violates state law. They were seized by the Massachusetts Environmental Police with assistance from the Animal Rescue League of Boston. Romano paid a state-court-ordered fine of \$5,000 for these violations.

This case was investigated by special agents of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from Boston, New York, and Anchorage; the Massachusetts Environmental Police; the Massachusetts State Police; and investigators from the Alaska State Troopers Fish and Wildlife Protection.



# Minerals Management Service



Cynthia Quarterman, Director  
Rolando Gächter, Bureau Editor



Mike Blackwell is the MMS Atrium Building Employee of the Month for April.

## Prime Parking for Prime Employees

**Michael Blackwell**, who works in the Information Resources Management Division, is the winner of April's employee recognition program at the MMS Atrium Building in Herndon, Virginia. We recognize Mike for his outstanding IRM support to his fellow employees and commend him for his contributions and congratulate him on his selection!!!

Since its 10th anniversary celebration in 1992, MMS has been recognizing deserving Atrium Building employees every month with a reserved parking space near the entrance of the building.

All MMS employees in the Atrium Building are eligible. Nominations should be in a narrative form, describing the achievement in as much detail as possible and may be made by any individual with personal knowledge of the achievement. These achievements should be ones that are not normally recognized by other awards, such as a helpful cooperative attitude or a willingness to go the extra mile.

A panel of employees in the Atrium Building selects the employee of the month and announces its selection by the 15th of each month. This distinction does not preclude an individual from monetary or honorary recognition. This year's past winners include: **Margaret Clark** (January), **Inge Parrella** (February), and **Bud Danenberger** (March).

## ENERGY DAY '97

Young and old explored the world of offshore natural gas and oil production recently at the Pacific Region's hands-on exhibit at the American Petroleum Institute's Energy Day 97 in Ventura, California. Students, educators and the public examined local rock and oil samples, while MMS geologists **Dennis Tayman** and **Jeff Kennedy** explained the process of locating hydrocarbon resources beneath the ocean floor.

Visitors quickly learned how to extract these resources as they took turns rotating the sets of teeth on a small drill bit. The circular grind of the drill bit illustrated how the equipment cuts through layers of rock in pursuit of natural gas and oil deposits. The exhibit discussed the many sciences employed within MMS and affirmed the agency's commitment to promoting safe, problem-free natural gas and oil operations offshore California.

Chris Oynes, the regional director for the Gulf of Mexico Outer Continental Shelf, dons the red jacket—a traditional signal for a big sale—in preparation for Sale 166 in New Orleans.



# A Shining TIMS Success

Tim Powers

Despite a loss of power that left parts of the New Orleans Central Business District in the dark, Sale 166 was a shining success—not only the largest Outer Continental Shelf lease sale in MMS history but also the first to use the Technical Information Management System (TIMS) sale applications.

The high technology TIMS is a sophisticated relational database that integrates and automates MMS activities. The Office of Leasing and Environment and the Information Technology Division (formerly the TIMS Project Office) designed the system to mimic the business functions of MMS employees in their day-to-day routines of administering, managing, and regulating offshore drilling.

On the day of the sale (March 5), staffers began connecting and testing the TIMS equipment at 4:30 in the morning. By 6 a.m., all appeared ready. But



Behind the scenes at Sale 166, MMS employees enter bid data into a new lease sales tracking system.

just as the announcement was made, "Gentlemen, I think we're ready for a sale!" the Central Business District went dark.

For about ten seconds the only lighting in the hotel conference room came from the soft blue glow of the sale system computer screens. Though the team had prepared for a blackout, the members breathed a collective sigh of relief when the lights came on again. After retesting the equipment, the system ran without a hitch and easily handled what proved to be an historic lease sale.

The sale began at 9 a.m. with **Regional Director Chris Oynes** opening and reading the first bid. After the bids were read, the dollar amounts for each bid were entered into the database. The local area network processed the bid amounts, ranked the bids, and produced the sale day reports for public distribution.

After more than six hours and almost 1,800 bids, the largest sale in the history of the Outer Continental Shelf ended. It had generated more than \$1 billion in bids. MMS staff put sale reports onto the GOMR internet homepage by about 4:30 p.m. that day, only 12 hours after the system had been setup. MMS staff then packed up the equipment and headed back to the office.

Although the sale lasted only several hours, preparing for it was a far more lengthy process. Even though MMS had fielded the system at last September's Alaska lease sale and had tested it many times in mock sales, the system had never faced such a high volume of data.

This cooperative effort owes its success to many people, including, among others, Office of Leasing and Environment staffers, who used the sale system, and Information Technology Division personnel, who helped design and program TIMS. And each sale experience will make the system work even better.

## A Correction Worth Making...

In the April issue of *People, Land, & Water*, we understated the benefits of Central Gulf Sale 166. The \$824,055,489 in high bids means that each of MMS's 2,000 employees, by way of planning, processing, and maintaining Sale 166 leases to be issued, was responsible for more than \$412,000 going to the U.S. Treasury. That's certainly better than the \$41,200 we reported last month!





## Senator Baucus Delivers MMS Computers to Montana Schools



Senator Max Baucus thanks MMS Director Cynthia Quarterman for her role in securing MMS computers for students in Montana.

U.S. **Senator Max Baucus** (Montana) loaded and delivered refurbished MMS computers to Helena Middle School late last March. The computers were loaded up at Malmstrom Air Force Base where they had been and upgraded.

“This is a statewide project that I have been working on for a long time,” the Senator said. “And it is exciting to be able to get these computers to the kids who need them.”

Volunteers, both civilians and military personnel, at Malmstrom added components that gave the computers advanced capabilities, including access to the internet. At the base, Baucus thanked **Jeanette Fletcher** of MMS for the volunteer effort.

The Senator earlier thanked MMS **Director Cynthia Quarterman** in Washington, D.C. for the bureau’s role in bringing these computers to young students in Montana. MMS was able to donate the computers through President Clinton’s Executive Order 12999, which allows for the transfer of excess federal

## Inducted



**Helene Baker**, an auditor at the Lakewood Compliance office, was recently inducted into the Society of Government Planners Meeting Association. Baker also organized the Association of Government Accountants Professional Development Conference, held in Denver, Colorado, March 5 to 6, 1997. Congratulations Helene!

# Studying MMS Customer Satisfaction with Royalty Management

Karen Johnson

A team that has been studying customer satisfaction with the Royalty Management Program recently found that most major customers are satisfied with the overall quality of MMS service. The survey also found that though levels of customer satisfaction have improved over the past two years, there is room for improvement in some areas.

The Study Team compared surveys it conducted in 1994 and 1996 with seven major customers: States, Indian Allottees (individual Indian land owners), Indian Tribes, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), industry, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and Offshore Minerals Management within MMS. The team evaluated changes in customers’ levels of satisfaction and recommended a future focus for customer service.

The survey results for overall quality show most respondents are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the quality of Royalty Management Program services (see table). MMS improvement since 1994



was most marked in the responses from States and Indian Tribes where “satisfied” and “nearly satisfied” levels reached an ideal 100 percent. Respondents from industry, Indian Allottees, and within MMS also showed improved levels of

satisfaction, notably since 1994, but not yet reaching 100 percent.

But the surveys also indicated areas needing improvement, because the responses from the BIA and BLM showed deteriorated levels of support since 1994. The BLM responses, for example, showed MMS had lost all “very satisfied” respondents and dropped to a 62 percent “satisfied” rate.

Using standard questions allowed the team to establish customer trends and gauge improvements. To prepare the 1996 survey and measure changes in customer service, the team used the five areas of customer concern it identified in the 1994. Those areas were communications; automated information systems; training; reporting requirements; and regulations, policies, and procedures.

Other survey questions allowed Royalty Management Program management to determine which problem areas were resolved and whether new problems had developed since 1994.

Jack B. Irion

The tiny radio receiver strapped over my left ear crackled to life: “Station 57, distance 11.3 meters, depth 87 feet.” While floating over the bearing circle mounted above the rocky sea floor, I read the compass heading of the tape measure fixed to its center and added the directional notation, “37°” to the other information on my clipboard. I pressed the talk button mounted on my diving mask and radioed back to my dive partner, **Dr. Rik Anuskiewicz**: “Copy Station 57, distance 11.3 meters, depth 87 feet.”

As Rik swam with the tape measure to the next mapping station, I paused to marvel at my surroundings some 80 feet beneath the surface of the Gulf on an isolated outcrop of rock known as Sonnier Banks.

For a marine archaeologist accustomed to diving in turbid rivers and bays, the view was spectacular. I could clearly distinguish fish, rock formations, and other divers 60-70 feet away. The colors of the rainbow swirled around me as queen angels, blue angels, and triggerfish ignored me and a fleet of silvery look-downs cruised by in tight formation. Our marine biologist, **Dr. Ann Bull**, would later tally some

92 different species of fish inhabiting this unique natural resource.

We felt privileged to take part in a cooperative first-look at a tiny jewel in Vermilion, South Addition, Block 305. The Sonnier Banks, about 75 miles off the Louisiana coast, are a mid-shelf bank consisting of bare, bedded Tertiary limestones, sandstones, claystones, and siltstones rising in several peaks created by the collapse of a crest of a salt diapir. These peaks and outcrops form the habitat for a wide variety of marine life in what would otherwise

## A Jewel in the Gulf



be a featureless plain on the continental shelf. Sonnier lies in a block MMS is considering leasing and it was our job to evaluate and characterize the area to help determine how best to protect it during lease development.

MMS staffers **Les Dauterive, Ann Bull, Rik Anuskiewicz, Terry Dempre**, and I joined scientists, graduate students, and volunteers from Texas A&M University, the Texas State Aquarium, the Aquarium of the Americas, and the Gulf Reef Environmental Action Team in a 3-day project last June.

Thanks in part to ideal weather conditions, the project yielded a wealth of information on invertebrate and vertebrate marine life. Rik and I used our archaeological experience to begin mapping the photo stations so they could be monitored through time for any changes.

My reverie was broken once again by my radio headset: “Jack, I m down to 1,000 pounds, we need to head back.” I checked my own air gauge and returned a thumbs-up signal. “Great dive!” I radioed. “Roger that!” came the reply. We both knew that this dive had been one of our best.

MMS divers read directional information from bearing circle.